

LOCAL 1-S NEWS

for department store workers

VOL. 10, NO. 18

401

MAY 29, 1959

1959 Blood Bank Drive Tops '58 Figures

The annual Local 1-S, Macy's Blood Bank drive, got off to a flying start at Flatbush on May 18 with 71 pints, and on May 19 when collections at Herald Square reached 237 pints, surpassing the figure reached on the first day of the drive last year. The second day blood donation of 231 pints also was higher than the corresponding day last year. Parkchester, with 50 pints collected on May 18, was under last year's figure.

While most of the donors had contributed in previous Blood Bank drives, a number gave blood for this first time this year. Among these were several who had tried to contribute

in previous years but had been turned down for medical reasons. For the most part, this had been due to a low hemoglobin count.

In those cases where a donor who had been rejected previously was now accepted, broad smiles were in evidence. "It's wonderful to be able to give blood," they said.

For the first time this year, the Red Cross was able to send a mobile unit to the White Plains store, thus making it possible for many more people in that branch to contribute. Last year, because Westchester hospitals turned down the use of Bloodmobiles in that county, White Plains employees had to travel to the

Bronx in order to give blood. However, through the efforts of the Westchester AFL-CIO Council and other interested groups, the Bloodmobile went to White Plains on May 25.

Hailing the early response as "extremely encouraging," President Sam Kovenetsky and Vice-Presidents Phil Hoffstein and Bill Atkinson expressed the hope that the final figures would set a new record in the annual Local 1-S Macy's drive.

A complete report on the drive, which was still in progress as this issue went to press, will appear in the next issue of the 1-S News. See Page 2 for photos of Blood Bank drive.

1-S Backs Hospital Strike

The gallant struggle of more than 3,000 workers in six voluntary hospitals in New York City to win decent wages and working conditions is getting wholehearted support from Local 1-S. The officers of the local recommended that substantial financial assistance be extended to the hospital strikers, and the '1-S' Executive Board was expected to act on the recommendation at its meeting on May 26, as this issue went to press.

In addition to direct contributions from the local treasury, Local 1-S members are being asked to contribute food for strikers and their families. Food collection barrels will be set up by Local 1-S in front of all Macy stores, similar to those used for relief of striking furniture workers and coal miners in previous years.

Moral support for the strikers was extended May 20 when two busloads of Local 1-S officers, administrators and shop stewards went from union headquarters to Beth David Hospital at 42nd Street and Second Avenue. The sixty '1-S' members were welcomed with open arms by the pickets. For the next hour and more, the picket line was manned by the '1-S' group.

A similar demonstration was due to take place on May 26 following the Executive Board meeting. Pres. Sam Kovenetsky also urged all members of Local 1-S—especially those living near one of the struck hospitals—to take a turn on the picket lines and show the strikers that they are not alone. The hospitals are Beth Israel, Beth David, Mt. Sinai and Lenox Hill, all in Manhattan; Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn and Bronx Hospital.

The hospital strike began on May 9 after months of fruitless negotiations in which the hospital managements rejected any form of union negotiation and made economic offers that barely scratched the surface of the workers' modest demands. With most of the workers making less than \$38 a week, and some earning as little as \$23 for a full 40 hours, with no unemployment insurance, no workers' compensation or disability insurance, no protection of any kind under state or federal laws, the hospital workers flocked into Retail Drug Employees Local 199 when that union, a sister local of '1-S,' began a city-wide organizing drive early this year.

Local 1199 had already organized and signed contracts with two other large

voluntary hospitals — Maimonides in Brooklyn, and Montefiore in the Bronx—but the Greater N.Y. Hospital Association took the position that since the law did not compel it to recognize the union, it absolutely refused to do so.

Acting together in defiance of Mayor Wagner, the New York Times, the Post, El Diario, the Amsterdam News, the entire labor movement of New York, the American Nursing Association, the Association of Reform Rabbis and many other organizations, which urged the hospitals to settle with '1199,' the hospital managements held fast to their stubborn anti-union position. Macy employees were shocked—though many were not surprised—to learn that Jack I. Strauss, president of Macy's, was one of the hospital trustees who led the fight against the union.

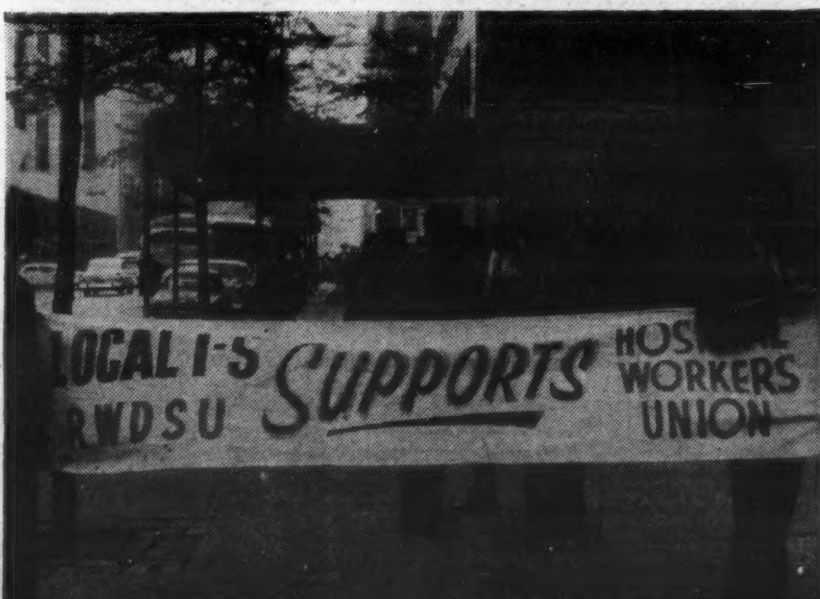
With no alternative open to them, and despite the open threats of court injunctions and jail sentences, the strike that many people had said couldn't take place began on May 9, after a two-week postponement at Mayor Wagner's request during which the hospitals continued their refusal to budge. Twelve days later, the workers decisively rejected, by a vote of 1,784 to 14, a management proposal which would have made some minor improvements in wages and working conditions but would have omitted any form of union recognition, even a steward system.

During the first two weeks of the strike, New York's labor movement adopted the walkout as its very own. Under the leadership of Harry Van Arsdale, president of the AFL-CIO Central Labor Council, the unions of the city rallied to the support of the hospital strikers to an unprecedented degree. Money, food, manpower—all were offered generously and unstintingly. Van Arsdale himself has devoted practically full time to the cause of the hospital workers for more

(Continued on Page 4)

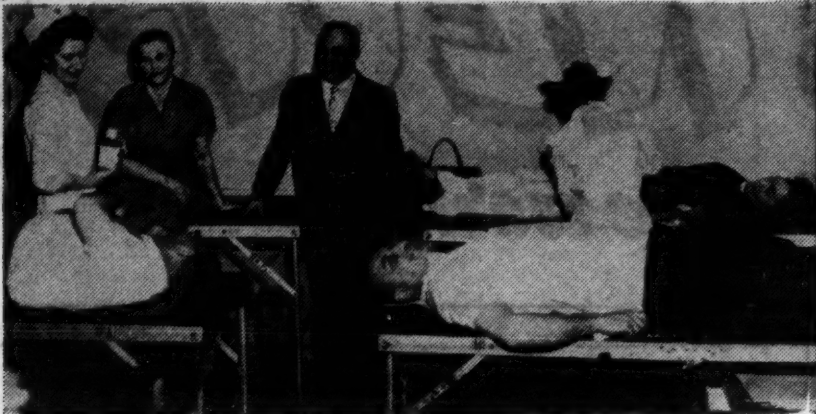


Two chartered buses took 60 officers, administrators and stewards from Local 1-S headquarters to picket line at Beth David hospital on May 20 as gesture of solidarity.



Banner declaring Local 1-S support for hospital strikers adorned picket line as well as bus which brought stewards to lend a hand to members of Local 1199.

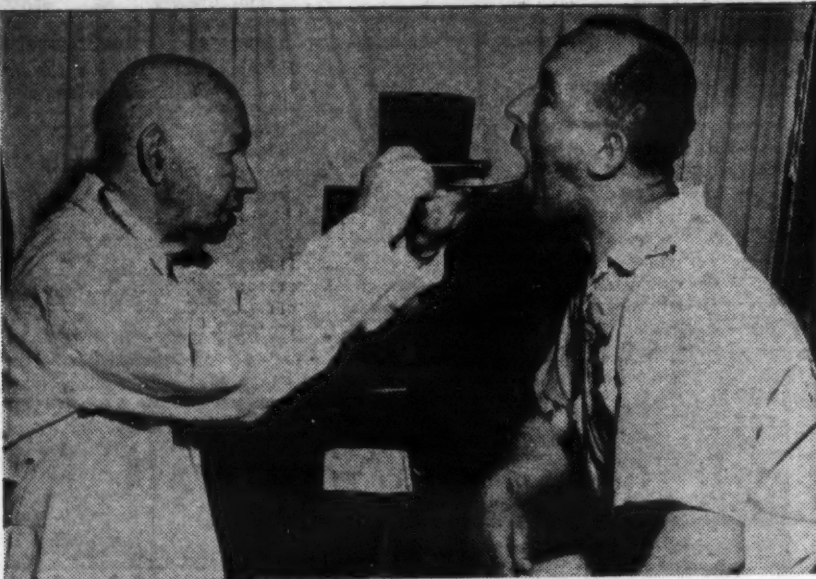
Blood Bank Drive in Photos



Vice-Pres. Phil Hoffstein, center, cheers up some Local 1-S members from Flatbush store as they make their donations to Blood Bank on May 18. Phil is long-time donor.



Varying expressions on faces of these Herald Square members of Local 1-S reflect their anticipation of what it feels like to give blood. Fact: it doesn't hurt a bit.



Thorough checkup by doctor before acceptance as blood donor in Local 1-S, Macy's Blood Bank drive is health protection measure for recipient of blood as well as donors.



Red Cross volunteers and nurses take histories of Local 1-S Parkchester members on May 18. The Bronxites contributed a total of 50 pints that day—less than last year.

1-S Wins Four Weeks Pay In Unfair Layoff Grievance

Macy's efforts to save money by keeping the number of employees down below a reasonable minimum backfired in one case this month, and is the subject of another grievance which is now being reviewed by the store's labor relations department.

The first case, which wound up costing the store four weeks pay, was that of Andrea Lopez, a sales clerk in Dept. 42. When a demonstrator in the department was reduced to sales clerk, Andrea was laid off. Because of the shortage of clerical help in the store, the papers in the case, which would have shown that Andrea had more seniority than the demonstrator, never reached the department in time.

Administrator John Tercy took Andrea's case up with Macy's labor relations, which reviewed the facts and had to concede that the union was completely right. The result: four weeks pay for Andrea Lopez.

The other pending grievance is that of the female packers of the Fifth Floor Packing Department. The store has gradually been pushing more and more bulk packing on them, forcing them to handle

heavy weights and large-sized packages which should rightly go to bulk packers. The department normally has five male packers to handle bulk packing, but one of the five is on an extended leave of absence, while another has been absent because of illness for two months. With only three men to handle five men's work, the female packers have been forced by supervisor Lillian Kober to make up the difference.

Shop steward George Slade, of the Fifth Floor Packing Dept., instituted the grievance, which has been presented to Macy's labor relations by administrator Frank Milza. Local 1-S is seeking to get the company to hire more packers, if necessary, but in any event to see to it that women packers are not forced to handle bulk packing.

Anglers Ahoy! Fishing Party July 19

A Local 1-S Fishing Party has been planned for Sunday, July 19, and tickets are on sale now at the union office or through Jerry Harte, 5th Floor Boys' Clothing Dept., it was announced by the union's Activity Committee.

A deep-sea fishing boat, the Dolores II, has been chartered for the day to take the '1-S' anglers, their wives, friends, etc., out on the briny Atlantic for a day of fun and fish (we hope!). The Dolores II will leave Pier 2 at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn at 7 a.m. on July 19.

The price of the day's fishing is \$5, which includes all the bait you can use. Rods and reels may be rented from the captain at a nominal charge. In case of rain, the trip will be postponed one week to the following Sunday.

AFL-CIO Council Denounces Senate 'Labor Reform' Bill

WASHINGTON—The AFL-CIO Executive Council declared it "will not support" the Senate-passed labor "reform" bill because it would "unwarrantedly jeopardize the liberties of all honest trade unionists."

In an unanimously adopted statement, the 29-member council added that the AFL-CIO will continue its fight against corruption and racketeering and will "wage a vigorous battle in the House of Representatives to secure proper and necessary legislation which would aid the labor movement in its fight."

The first step in such a fight will be a point-by-point analysis of the bill to be presented to the House Labor Committee by AFL-CIO Pres. George Meany stressing the weaknesses and dangers of the Senate-passed bill. Meany is scheduled to testify on June 3.

The bill as passed by the Senate contains reporting and disclosure provisions

affecting unions, middlemen and employers, a so-called "bill of rights" governing union procedures and other provisions covering picketing, boycotts and Taft-Hartley Act provisions. It provides heavy criminal penalties for violations.

The council declared that what started out as a reporting and disclosure measure became, through a series of amendments on the Senate floor, "devised in malice or ignorance"—a bill "which in its present form could hamper legitimate trade unions engaged in legitimate pursuits and would unwarrantedly jeopardize the liberties of all honest trade unionists."

LOCAL 1-S NEWS

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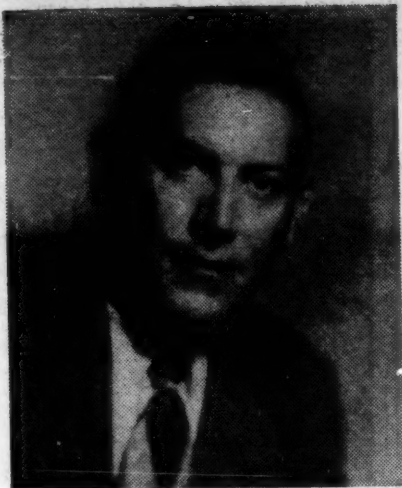
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Worth Talking About



By PRESIDENT SAM KOVENETSKY

ONCE AGAIN, as in every one of the past four years, members of Local 1-S, like retail employees everywhere, are focusing their attention on the nation's capital. For this year, as in several previous years, Congress is being urged to extend coverage under the federal wage-hour law, which is known as the Fair Labor Standards Act.

If you were to conduct a poll among an average group of citizens, I believe that a majority would know that there is a law in the United States which sets a minimum wage of \$1 an hour, a work-week of 40 hours, and provision for time-and-one-half for overtime above 40 hours. Most people know those facts—but I would bet that few of them know that only a little more than half of the workers in this country are covered by that law!

YES, IT'S A FACT: out of some 45 million workers who should be covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act, only about 25 million come under the protection of the law. The other 20 million, including some 7½ million retail employees, are not covered. And the big boys in the retail industry, including the department stores, the National Retail Dry Goods Association, the American Retail Federation, are trying very hard to keep things the way they are—and to prevent passage of the Kennedy-Morse-Roosevelt bill, which would extend coverage and would raise the minimum wage to \$1.25 an hour.

These employers have willing allies in Congress. Take Sen. Barry Goldwater, for instance. In addition to being one of the most reactionary of all Republican senators, Mr. Goldwater happens to be the owner of a chain of department stores in his home state of Arizona. In opposing federal coverage of the retail industry, Sen. Goldwater cries crocodile tears for the "little man" in retail industry, saying that coverage under the law would "hit small Main Street merchants across the country." He fails to mention that it would also hit such little "mama-and-papa" stores as R. H. Macy, Allied Dept. Stores, Federated Dept. Stores, F. W. Woolworth, S. H. Kress, W. T. Grant, J. C. Penney, Montgomery Ward, Sears Roebuck, and other companies—including the Goldwater chain.

SEN. GOLDWATER ALSO ARGUES that the states, rather than the federal government, should act on minimum wages. But this supporter of states' rights forgets to mention that more than half the states have no effective minimum wage laws at all, and only a handful—including New York and New Jersey—have set minimums as high as \$1 an hour. In Sen. Goldwater's own state, the minimum is 55 cents an hour—and there is no record that Goldwater ever lobbied for it to be increased or extended to cover more workers.

But in spite of Sen. Goldwater and all the big guns of the retail industry, the Kennedy-Morse-Roosevelt bill can be passed—if all of us do our job. The employers may have the money, the high-powered lobbyists, the friends in Congress—but the one thing they don't have is numbers.—especially when those numbers represent voters. You'd be surprised what an effect postcards or letters can have when they're sent in by thousands of voters.

If you want to do your share in boosting the minimum wage and gain protection under the law for retail employees, write to your Congressman now. If the Kennedy-Morse-Roosevelt bill is passed, it will help lift all retail employees' wages, even those who are already earning above the minimum.

SISTER LOCAL WAGES HOSPITAL STRUGGLE

As this column is being written, a bitter struggle is being waged here in New York City by a group of people who are denied not only the protection of the minimum wage law, but almost every other law as well. I am referring to the workers in the voluntary hospitals who have been organized by our sister local, Retail Drug Employees Local 1199.

The hospital workers, because they work for so-called "non-profit" institutions, are denied unemployment insurance, disability benefits, workmen's compensation, the right to organize and practically everything else. Being completely at the mercy of their employers, they work as long as 48 hours a week for wages as low as \$28 a week. The majority of those organized by Local 1199 earn less than \$38 a week. Incidentally, the low-wage policy of the hospitals apparently doesn't apply to executives. Many of the hospital directors make \$40,000 and \$50,000 a year. Unlike the nurses' aides, orderlies, kitchen workers, lab technicians, and other low-paid employees, these executives demand—and get—as much as or more than they would earn equivalent jobs in private industry.

Thus we see that the voluntary hospitals are forcing their lowest-paid employees to be involuntary philanthropists—to subsidize the operations of the hospitals by working for sub-standard wages. It is conditions like these, and the arrogant refusal of the hospitals to recognize and deal with the union of the workers' choice, that caused the strike in the six hospitals.

AT THE VERY MOMENT when the Greater N.Y. Hospital Association is using every weapon at its command to thwart the desires of hospital workers for decent wages, working conditions and a union to represent them, hospital executives are appearing before the State Commissioner of Insurance to fight for an increase in Blue Cross rates. And

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Roosevelt Field Salespeople In Big-Ticket Departments Meet 1-S Leaders, Members

A meeting of salespeople of the Roosevelt Field store's "big-ticket" departments with union leaders and representatives of the same departments in the organized stores was held May 19 in Hempstead. It was pronounced "an unqualified success" by both the groups who attended.

President Sam Kovenetsky chaired the meeting. Also representing Local 1-S were Organizers Ben Bially and Marge Hobbs, and the following members: William Dugan of Herald Square Rug Department; Anthony La Salvia of Jamaica Furniture Department, and Andrew Felicia of Parkchester Major Appliances.

Meeting with the '1-S' group were newly-organized employees of similar departments at the Roosevelt Field store, as well as salespeople in other departments where commissions represent a major part of the employees' earnings. Together they constituted a majority of the "big-ticket" salespeople at Macy's Roosevelt Field.

After hearing a presentation of the union program, with emphasis on its effect on commission salespeople, the Roosevelt Fielders were urged to ask questions and to sound off on problems confronting them. A fruitful and interesting discussion period then followed, in which practically everybody participated.

The May 19 meeting was the latest in a series of such meetings that have been held with the object of bringing Roosevelt Field employees together with their counterparts at the organized stores. Additional meetings are planned for the near future.

Commenting on the meeting with the commission salespeople, Pres. Kovenetsky said:

"We tried to answer every question fairly, fully and honestly. We did not duck anything that the people wanted to know, and I think they appreciated it. I am sure they went back to the Roosevelt Field store with a greater knowledge of how our union works and what its objectives are.

"By being armed with the facts, they are better prepared to meet and answer mis-statements about Local 1-S when executives circulate them. I hope that eventually we can meet every Roosevelt Field employee at such face-to-face meetings. When we have done that, I believe the organization of the store will be assured."

60-Day Clause Shows Its Value

Shop stewards of all departments attended meetings called by Local 1-S administrators during May to discuss the provisions of the new contract and the handling of grievances under it. At the very time that many of them were meeting, a situation was taking place which clearly demonstrated the value of the union contract and the need to fight for constant improvements in it.

This situation was brought about by the strike of United Parcel drivers, which affected business in Macy's and other department stores. In previous years, this would have meant layoffs for many employees and transfers to lower-rated and lower-paying jobs for other employees.

But this year, while Macy's did lay off a number of employees and transfer others to lower-rated jobs, the total number of such transfers was substantially reduced—for one reason: the new union contract.

The new contract provision, which came into use only a few weeks after it was negotiated and written into the Local 1-S agreement with Macy's, provides that if a regular employee with five or more years of service is transferred to a lower-rated job classification, such an employee shall continue to receive his or her regular rate of pay for the next 60 days.

This "60-day clause," as it has come to be known, undoubtedly deterred Macy's from making a much greater number of transfers than were actually made. And this, in turn, possibly prevented additional layoffs of those employees whom the transferred employees would have replaced.



HONORED BY POLICE: A citation honoring Amalgamated Clothing Workers Pres. Jacob Potofsky for his work on behalf of the Police Athletic League was presented by top city officials last month at Grace Mansion. From left, District 45 Retirement Plan Dir. Jack Onofsky, EWDSU Exec. Vice-Pres. Alex Ball, 1-S Pres. Sam Kovenetsky, Potofsky, Police Comm. Stephen Kennedy, Mayor Robert F. Wagner and Warren Bunn of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

1-S Sending 49 Kids to Summer Camps

Forty-nine children of members of Local 1-S will enjoy a happy and healthful vacation this summer, thanks to the union's summer camp program. The applications of the 49 kids have been processed and all are assured of a place at one of the camps cooperating with the AFL-CIO Community Services Committee.

President Sam Kovenetsky is chairman of the CSC Camp Program. In addition to arranging for children of union members to go to various non-profit camps, the committee is participating in the Friendly Town program, which provides for an interchange of city and country kids. Through the Herald-Tribune's Fresh Air Fund, arrangements are made for city children to board with farm families, and vice versa.

Two 1-S Delegates To Attend COPE Meeting in Syracuse

Local 1-S will send two delegates to the 1959 area conference to be conducted by the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education (COPE). It was reported by Administrator Charles Boyd. The conference will be held June 9 and 10 at the Hotel Syracuse in Syracuse, New York.

A letter from Louis Hollander, chairman of the executive council of the State AFL-CIO, and Harold J. Garino, State AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer, announcing the conference and urging Local 1-S to send delegates, pointed out that the conference will not only discuss "procedures and problems of our political program involving registration, communication of issues and campaign techniques," but will also lay the groundwork for next year's important presidential election campaign.

Hospital Strike —

(Continued from Page 1)

than a month and has done an outstandingly effective job.

As this issue goes to press, the outcome of the strike is still in doubt. While the strikers are firmly united and have become seasoned union veterans on the picket line, the hospitals are threatening mass arrests, eviction of those who live in hospital-owned buildings and other punitive measures.

But with the continued support of the labor movement, there can be only one final settlement: a union contract and union wages and working conditions. The hospital managements, like other employers in this city, will have to retreat from their arrogant position if they want the patients in the hospitals to be properly cared for.

Personals

FOR SALE

HOLLYWOOD BED, full size, extra firm innerspring mattress and box spring. Excellent condition. \$50. Call any time: VI 7-5978.

BABY GRAND PIANO, 54", \$300; two rugs, wool, reasonable, 11 x 15 and 11 x 12; one U. S. Royal tire, 800 x 15, slightly used, \$8. Call VI 6-2383.



TAG DAY FOR CANCER CRUSADE: Union leaders and show business personalities joined forces last month to make a success of solicitation of funds for Cancer Crusade. Noon-time show at 37 St. and Seventh Avenue featured speech by Sam Kovenetsky, who is a member of New York City Cancer Committee's Board of Directors, shown at left atop sound truck, entertainment by comedienne Pat Carroll and Peggy Cam, standing at left, and other entertainers. Above, Administrator Charles Boyd and Mildred Kaplonsky catch shoppers outside Macy's.

Worth Talking About—

(Continued from Page 3)

who make up the largest number of Blue Cross subscribers who will have to pay this increase or fight for it in collective bargaining with their employers? Why, the working men and women of this city! The hospitals are solidly united on both scores: no union conditions for their employees; higher rates for hospitalization for all other employees.

We in Local 1-S can feel a special sympathy for and identification with the hospital strikers because we are acquainted with at least one of the employer representatives who has been fighting their efforts to organize. He is Mr. Jack I. Strauss, president of Macy's. Since he is a philanthropist, Mr. Strauss serves as a hospital trustee, and he has been chosen as one of the six top hospital spokesmen to try to defeat Local 1199's organizing campaign. We can assure Mr. Strauss that such efforts won't be any more successful than similar efforts to break our union.

We in Local 1-S, like the rest of the labor movement in New York City, are giving our full support to the hospital strikers. We believe that it is every American's inalienable right to join a union of his own choice—whether he works in a retail store, a coal mine or a hospital. In fighting for the right of the hospital workers to organize, we are fighting for our own right to have a union too.

THAT IS WHY WE ARE BACKING LOCAL 1199 to the limit, with money, manpower and all the support we can muster.

I would like to urge every member of Local 1-S to help the hospital workers in their struggle. Picket with them, encourage them, show them that they are not alone and that they are fighting for justice and freedom. Remember: this is YOUR fight too.

Letters To the Editor

Proud to be in '1-S'

Thank you all so much for helping my husband during his illness. My husband and I wish to extend our sincerest gratitude for the union's prompt and courteous service.

I am indeed very proud to be affiliated with such a fine organization as Local 1-S, and deeply appreciate the benefits I have received through our Group Health Plan.

Sincerely,
Mildred Bencini, 18-81

Thanks for Cards

I wish to thank the Local 1-S Committee for the lovely card they sent me. Also my thanks to all my co-workers for the many lovely cards and gifts sent to me during my recent illness. It is so nice to know I have so many friends who were so concerned about me. It is well appreciated. Thanks again.

Sincerely,
Frances Syko, 18-63

Appreciates Gifts

Could you please put a note of thanks in your fine paper? I wish to thank the Services Committee and my friends throughout the store for their gifts and "get-well" cards.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Loretta Hetlyn

Thanks in Rhyme

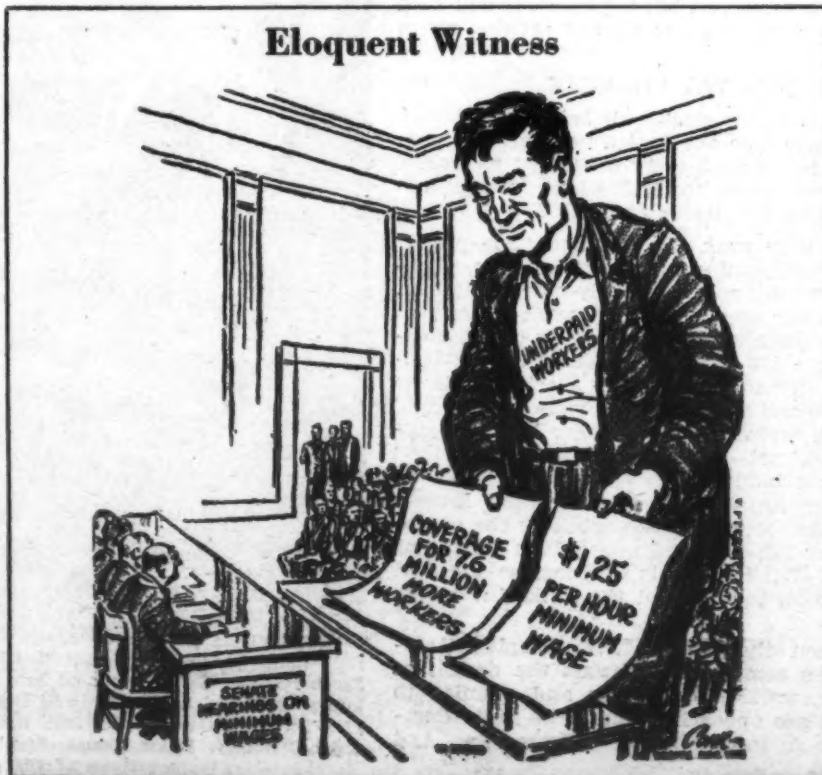
I recently underwent surgery, and thanks to the officers of Local 1-S who are always working untiringly to better the conditions of the members, my stay at the hospital, including surgery and anesthesia, was taken care of. I don't know of a better way of expressing my thanks to each and every one of you than by offering this bit of poetry:

If with pleasure you are viewing
Any work a man is doing
If you like him or you love him—tell him now.
Don't withhold your approbation
Till the parson makes oration
And he lies with snowy lillies o'er his brow

For no matter how you shout it,
He won't care a rap about it,
He won't care how many tear drops you have shed.
If you think some praise is due him
Now's the time to tell it to him
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead!

Fraternally yours,
Eugene Edwards, 93-33

Eloquent Witness



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